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\$1.48
THE SET

Agents
Wanted

SWAMP TERROR!

THIS IS THE TALE OF A HORROR THAT BROODED AND WAITED BENEATH A SLIMY GURGLING ACRE OF SWAMPLAND... AND OF A DEAD MAN WHO FULLILLED A CAREFULLY PLANNED PLOT TO MURDER HIS ENTIRE FAMILY FOR A VERY SURPRISING REASON!

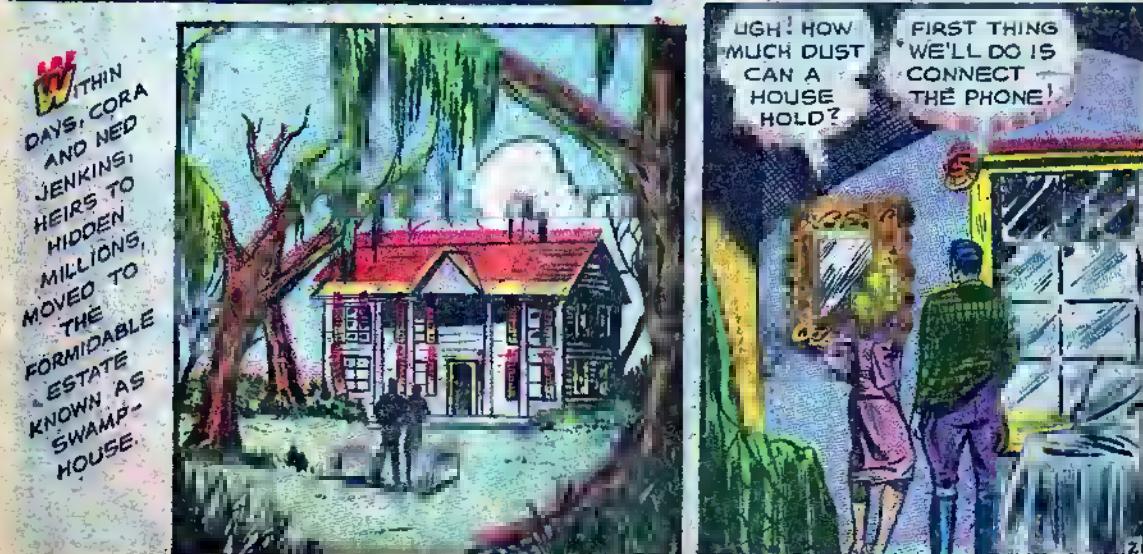
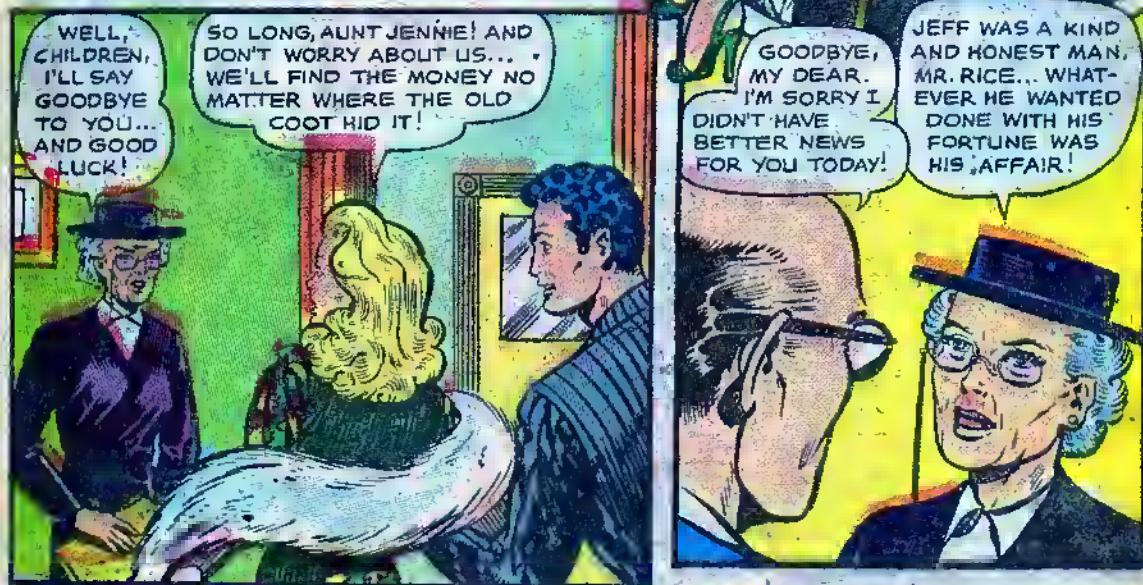


YOU'VE ALL HEARD JEFF JENKINS' WILL BEFORE... HIS FORTUNE IS LEFT TO YOU TWO, CORA AND NEP, AS HIS ONLY REMAINING NIECE AND NEPHEW...

THAT'S EASY TO TAKE...

...AND NOTHING FOR ME AGAIN! BUT WE WERE SO CLOSE IN LIFE... I DON'T THINK ANY MAN MEANT MORE TO HIS SISTER THAN JEFF MEANT TO ME...





THE FIRST NIGHT UNDER DECAYING ROOF WAS NOT FOR SLEEPING... ALL THROUGHOUT THE DARKENED HOURS, HAUNTING MOANING SPLIT THE SILENCE, AND NERVOUSLY LISTENING, EACH COUSIN SUSPECTED THE OTHER OF TRYING TO FRIGHTEN 'HIM AWAY...



ED JENKINS
WAS INTENT
ON ESCAPING
FROM THE
SLAMY
SUCTION OF
THE FOUL
MUD-HOLE.
NEVER
REALIZING
THAT
BEHIND HIM
WAS 'LIVING
DEATH'...

SOMETHIN' S
RESTRAININ'
ME... CAN'T
SEEM TO
MOVE...

HELP! I'M NOT
SINKIN'... BEING
PULLED! HELP!
SOMEONE HELP ME!

BACK AT SWAMP
HOUSE, NED'S CRIES
ARE PLAINLY HEARD.
FEAR CLUTCHES
HIS COUSIN'S HEART.
FEAR AND DOUBT AT
THE SAME TIME.

THAT'S NED! IS
HE TRYING TO
FRIGHTEN ME
AGAIN?

BUT CORA WAS WRONG... NED W
BEYOND FRIGHTENING ANYONE.

COME
WITH US,
COUSIN.

IT IS
USELESS
TO STRUGGLE...

W—WHO ARE
YOU? WHERE
ARE YOU
TAKIN' ME?

NED WAS
HALF LED,
HALF
DRAGGED
INTO A
DANK
CHAMBER
AND THERE
ON A THRONE
LIKE AFFAIR
SAT A
WRETCHED
HUMAN FORM...
AS NED
STARED IN
TOTAL HORROR
IT BEGAN
TO SPEAK...

STEP CLOSER. MY EYES HAVE
LITTLE STRENGTH LEFT. YOU
ARE A JENKINS... ANOTHER
MONEY-MAD JENKINS... BUT
YOU ARE FINISHED NOW...
YOU HAVE JOINED YOUR
CLANSMEN...

YES, I AM YOUR UNCLE JEFF JENKINS.
MY MONEY WAS COVETED BY YOU
ALL... BUT I HAVE REMOVED YOU
ONE BY ONE...

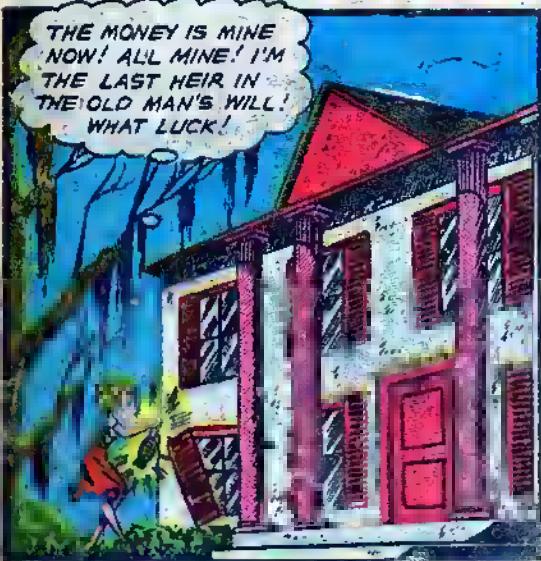


IGHTING WITH THE STRENGTH
OF TEN MEN, NED TRIED TO
BREAK AWAY FROM THE SLIMY
CREATURES THAT WERE ONCE
MEN, BUT IT WAS OF NO AVAIL...
HE WAS PUSHED BODILY INTO A
CELL-LIKE PIT...

THIS CAN'T BE TRUE! I'VE LOST
MY MIND! I'VE GONE MAD...
MAD LIKE THEY ARE...



AFTER
WAITING
HOURS
FOR NED
TO RETURN.
CORA
FINALLY
BEGAN TO
SEARCH
FOR HIM.
SLOWLY
AND
CAUTIOUSLY
SHE
APPROACHED
THE SWAMP...



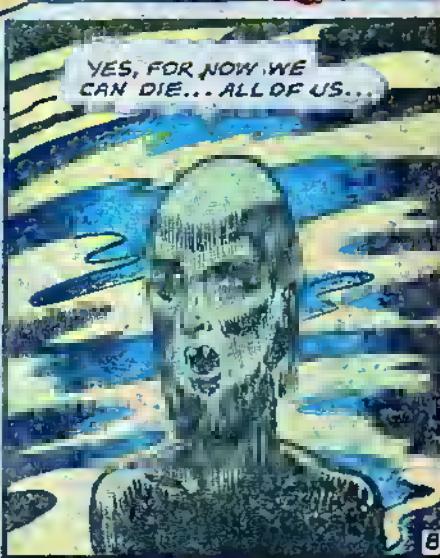
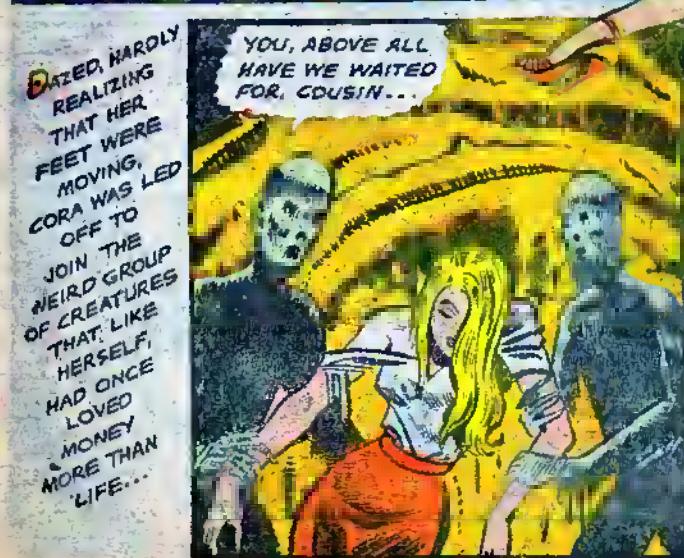
WITHOUT
A THOUGHT
OF NED'S
GRIM FINISH,
CORA
RUSHED TO
SWAMP-
HOUSE AND
EXCITEDLY
PUT IN A
LONG
DISTANCE
CALL TO
THE
FAMILY
ATTORNEY.



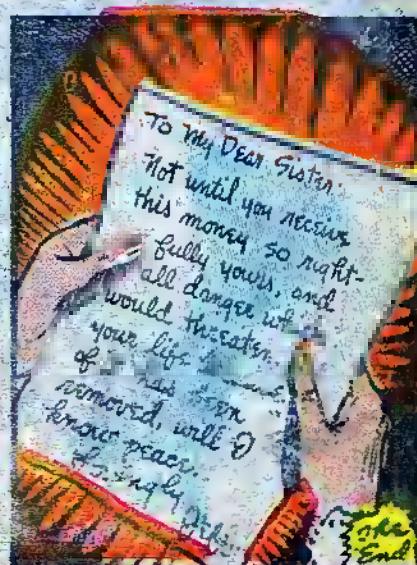
DON'T WORRY! I'LL LOCATE THAT LOOT IF IT TAKES ME THE REST OF MY LIFE!







10 MILES AWAY FROM THE MACABRE SWAMP SCENE ATTORNEY RICE QUIETLY EXPLAINS MANY FACTS TO A GENTLE-FACED WOMAN JENNIE JENKINS.. THE LAST LIVING MEMBER OF THE STRANGE...



Chamber of DOOM!

EACH DAY SHE STOOD AT THE WINDOW SMILING AT THE YOUNG MAN WHO PASSED, BUT MINGLED WITH THE LOVE IN HER EYES, WAS DEATH!

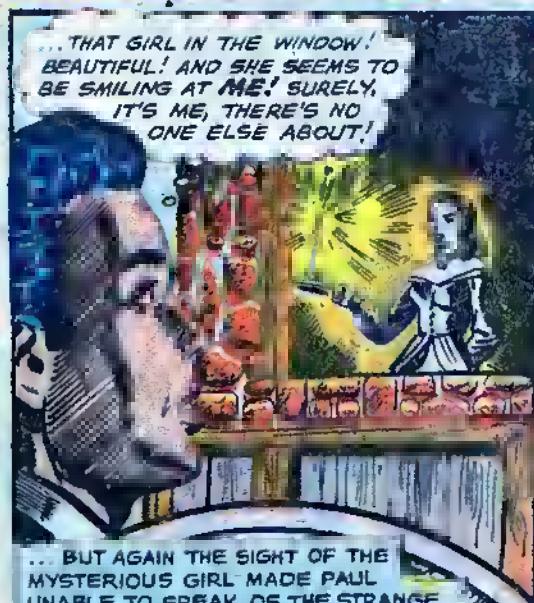
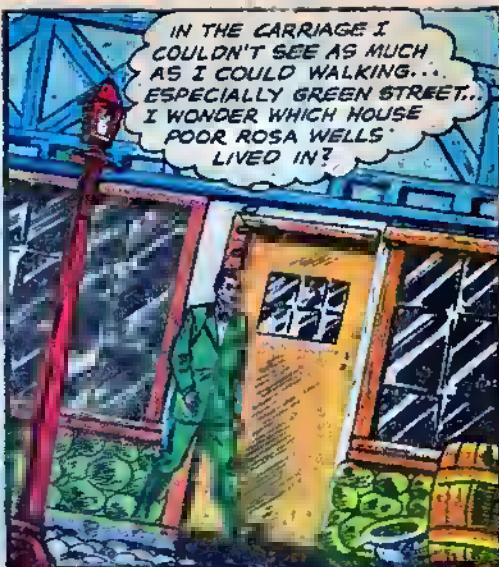
YEARS AFTER HIS DEPARTURE FROM THE VILLAGE OF WHITECLIFF, PAUL AMES FINALLY RETURNS HOME AND IS GREETED AT THE DEPOT BY HIS TWIN, PETER AMES.

WE'LL TAKE THE WEST ROAD, PAUL...

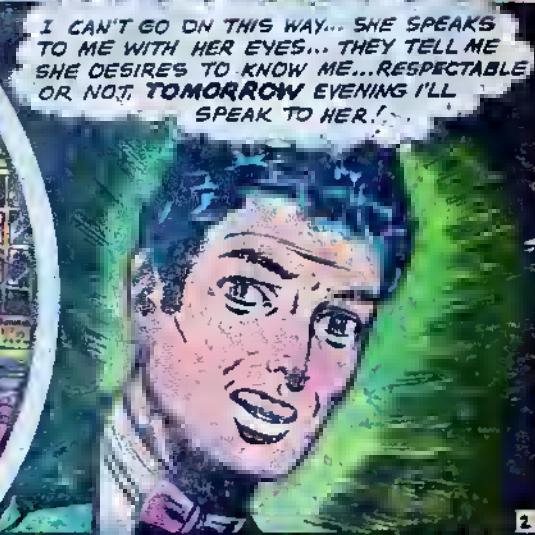
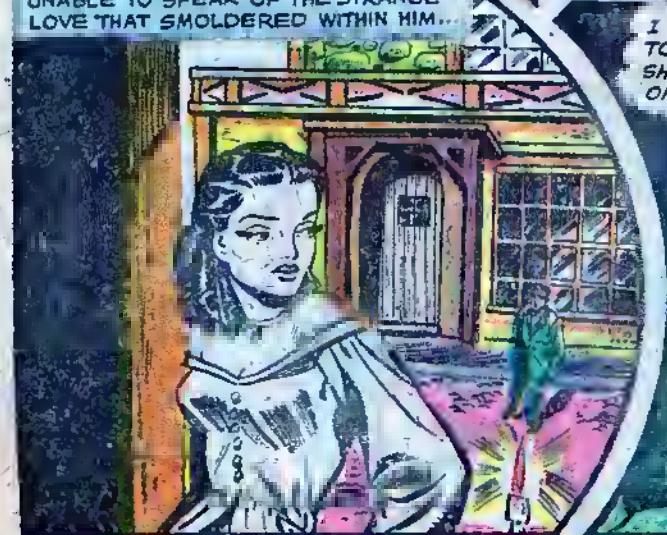
BUT WHY, WHEN GREEN STREET CUTS OUR DISTANCE IN HALF?

YOU'RE RIGHT, OF COURSE, BUT I AVOID GREEN STREET! SILLY OF ME, I KNOW... BUT THERE WAS A GIRL THERE... A ROSA WELLS... I... WELL, FRANKLY I JILTED HER! SHE DIED SOON AFTER... AND AS GOSSIPERS WOULD HAVE IT, SHE TOOK HER OWN LIFE BECAUSE OF ME!

FUNNY... PETER SOUNDS PROUD OF IT!



THE SMILING MAIDEN MADE SO DEEP AN IMPRESSION ON PAUL AMES, HE FOUND HIMSELF UNABLE TO THINK OF ANYTHING BUT HER LOVELINESS... AND EACH DAY HE HURRIED TO GREEN STREET IN HOPES OF SEEING HER... AND ODDLY ENOUGH, HE WAS DAILY REWARDED...



THE FOLLOWING DAY, PAUL MECHANICALLY ACCOMPLISHED WORK, YET HIS HEART AND MIND FEVERISHLY AWAITED DUSK AND THE UNKNOWN LADY IN THE WINDOW... BUT WHEN HE FINALLY ARRIVED AT HER RESIDENCE...



SHE'S NOT THERE! BUT THIS IS THE FIRST TIME... I MUST SEE HER... I'M DETERMINED...

AS PAUL MOUNTED THE STONE STEPS, A FEELING OF APPREHENSION CAME OVER HIM... A SINISTER SILENCE LIKE THAT ENVELOPING A TOMB BREATHED FORTH FROM THE CHAMBER OF MYSTERY...



GOOD GRIEF! S-SHE'S BEEN MURDERED!

SICK WITH SHOCK AND HORROR, PAUL RUSHED TO HIS HOME AND RELATED THE ENTIRE EXPERIENCE TO HIS TWIN...

GREEN STREET! WHY DIDN'T YOU GO TO THE POLICE?

BECAUSE I CAN'T BELIEVE IT, PETER! YOU MUST COME WITH ME... TELL ME IF WHAT I SAW WAS REAL!

YOU HAVE HAD A STRANGE ROMANTIC DREAM, PAUL! I THINK YOU'VE IMAGINED IT ALL!

NO... I SAW HER! THE BEAUTIFUL GIRL... AND THE DAGGER... COME AND SEE FOR YOURSELF!

TO APPEASE HIS TWIN'S MAD RAVING, PETER RELUCTANTLY ACCOMPANIED HIM TO THE STREET HE HAD SO LONG AVOIDED... AND...

SHE'S IN HERE...

HERE! THIS IS WHERE ROSA LIVED!



KNOWING IT WAS SHEER COINCIDENCE, YET COLD, WITH FEAR, LET HIMSELF BE DRAGGED INTO THE VERY CHAMBER WHEREIN ROSA WELLS ONCE ABIDED...

NOW WHERE IS YOUR MURDERED MAIDEN, PAUL?

GONE! BUT SHE WAS HERE IN THIS VERY SPOT! I TELL YOU I SAW HER BODY!

IF YOU WEREN'T SO UPSET, I'D ACCUSE YOU OF TRYING TO PLAY A GRIM PRANK ON ME, PAUL! THIS WAS ROSA'S CHAMBER... NOW LET'S GO HOME!

I COULDN'T HAVE IMAGINED IT... I SAW HER... I LOVED HER AND NOW... NOW I DON'T UNDERSTAND...



PERHAPS YOU'VE BEEN WORKING TOO HARD HERE, PAUL... A TRIP TO THE CITY AGAIN MAY DO YOU GOOD...

SHE WAS SO FAIR... SO YOUNG... SO LONELY LOOKING...

...YOU ARE RIGHT, PETER... I'LL GO AWAY AGAIN... AWAY FROM GREEN STREET...

GOOD! NOW WHY DON'T YOU RETIRE, PAUL? YOU LOOK EXHAUSTED...



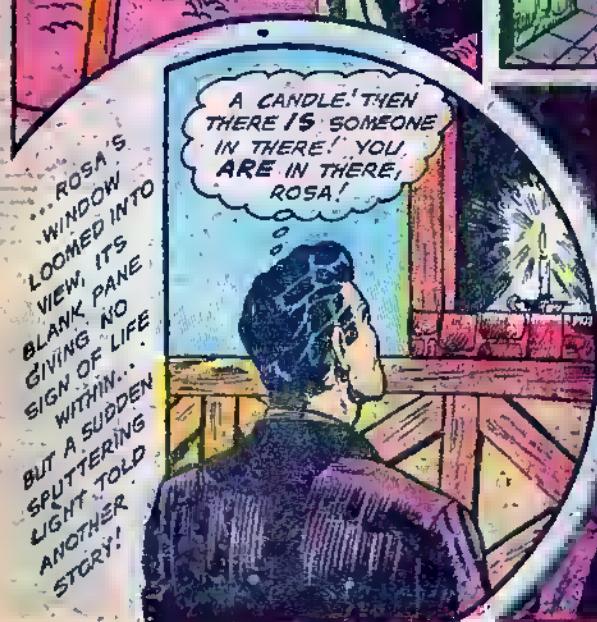
THE GIRL HE SPOKE OF FIT ROSA'S DESCRIPTION PERFECTLY... BUT SHE IS DEAD! IT COULDN'T HAVE BEEN ROSA...

FEARFUL DOUBTS THAT MADE NO SENSE RACED ABOUT PETER'S BRAIN. HE REACHED INTO HIS JACKET POCKET FOR HIS PIPE TO RELAX HIS THOUGHTS, BUT INSTEAD HIS FINGERS CLOSED ON A TINY METALLIC OBJECT...

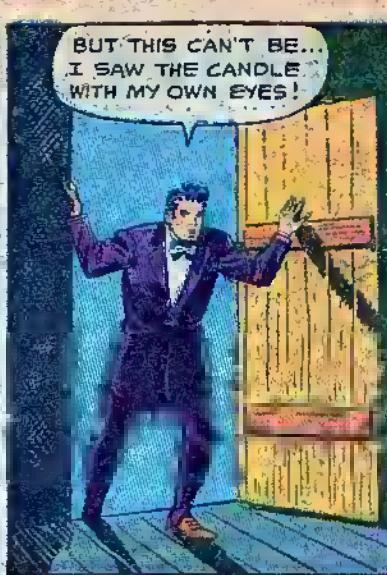


ROSA'S LOCKET! THE ONE GIFT I EVER GAVE HER! BUT NOW... HOW DO I COME TO HAVE IT NOW?

THE NIGHT
WAS SLEEPLESS
FOR BOTH
BROTHERS.
AND IN THE
DARKNESS,
DECISIONS
WERE BEING
MADE... PAUL
TO LEAVE
TOWN,
FOREVER;
AND PETER
TO REMAIN
SILENT
ABOUT THE
WEIRD
APPEARANCE
OF THE
LOCKET...



PETER THREW THE DOOR OPEN, BUT INSTANTLY HIS CONFIDENCE VANISHED... THERE WAS NO LIGHT WITHIN THE ROOM... THERE WASN'T EVEN A CANDLE BURNING IN THE SHADY INTERIOR...



HARDLY REALIZING WHAT HE DID, PETER ENTERED THE MUSTY ROOM, AND AS IF PRE-PLANNED, THE HEAVY DOOR SWUNG SHUT BEHIND HIM...



ROSA! NO... YOU'RE NOT REAL... I DON'T BELIEVE IT... KEEP AWAY...

MY LOCKET, PETER... I SHOULDN'T HAVE GIVEN IT TO YOU... I WANT IT AGAIN...



I WANT TO LOOK MY BEST SO YOU'LL LOVE ME, PETER... I MUST HAVE MY LOCKET... PLEASE...

NO! KEEP AWAY, I TELL YOU!



I DON'T HAVE THAT CURSED LOCKET! I THREW IT AWAY!

BUT I MUST HAVE IT... IT WAS THE ONLY GIFT YOU EVER GAVE ME...



A SCREAM ECHOED DOWN GREEN STREET... A CRY OF DEADLY TERROR THAT ROUSED THE TOWNSFOLK FROM THEIR HONEST SLUMBER... IT WAS HOURS BEFORE PETER AMES WAS FINALLY LOCATED, AND THEN HE WAS FAR BEYOND ANY EARTHLY AID...

THIS IS THE SECOND STRANGE DEATH IN THIS ROOM!

YOU WOULDN'T THINK THAT BIT OF RIBBON TWISTED AROUND HIS NECK WOULD BE ENOUGH TO KILL HIM, NOW WOULD YOU?



The End

PERILOUS PACT

By JOHN MARTIN

AT THE phone, Luigi chafed impatiently. From the other end of the wire came Bianca's words, pleading, pathetic.

"You have forgotten me, Luigi. I know you have. I know you have!"

Luigi stood there, scowling into the mouthpiece of the phone. It was hard to know what to say.

"I have seen you with Carla, Luigi. But, Luigi, you promised yourself to me!"

Still he said nothing. He ground his teeth. It was difficult, almost impossible, to reason with a woman. Even Carla, he knew, was difficult. Besides, he knew truth was on Bianca's side. But it had all happened so long ago!

"Look, Bianca," he said finally. "What happened when we were children can't matter to us now that we're grown. You can see that, can't you?" He hesitated. There was silence on the other end. He glanced impatiently at his wrist-watch. He had a date, he knew — not with Carla, but with a warehouse safe and a gun. "Bianca . . ." he began again. Then, he heard a click in the phone. She had hung up.

Breathing a sigh of relief, Luigi slammed the phone back on its base, picked up his hat, glanced carefully in the mirror and took the gun out of his bureau drawer. Instantly, as a knock sounded on the door, a stab of fear shot through him. He shot the weapon into his shoulder holster.

"Come in," he said softly. In the slums a man had to speak quietly. Death might lie at the end of a sharp word.

The door opened and Guiseppe Barto, Bianca's brother, stood there. Like Luigi, he was a little over twenty-one, built slender and wiry, with dark, intense eyes, black wavy hair. He walked into Luigi's room.

"You will not marry Bianca as you promised?" he asked quietly.

"I just spoke to . . ." Luigi began and stopped, a chill hand laying itself on his heart. How could Guiseppe know he had finally refused his sister? It had been only a moment.

"How did you know?" he said, tremulously.

Guiseppe smiled, his mouth tightening.

"I knew," he said. "It is not easy to hide things from me, Luigi. You knew that when we were boys. And, when we were boys did we not both sign a pact of friendship in blood? Did we not swear to be friends, for-

ever? Did you not swear to marry none other than my sister, Bianca? Now you have taken up with Carla!" He spat in derision.

Luigi shuddered. He knew how seriously the slums took such pacts. But he also knew he had grown away from the slums and their petty crimes. Guiseppe was still a stealer of trifles, as he had been when a boy. But Luigi — inwardly, Luigi smiled — had joined the bigger rackets. Now he even enjoyed the protection of the local political boss. As he remembered that, his courage came back. He sneered at Guiseppe.

"What shall a boy's act mean to a man?" he demanded. He shook his head. "I am sorry, Guiseppe — and I mean no harm — but I am a man now, as you are. I want Carla, not Bianca! And I mean to live my own life, not the cheap life of these slums!"

Guiseppe's face paled. His eyes snapped dangerously.

"You know the price of a broken oath among our people?" he asked.

"I know — the vendetta."

"The vendetta! And you take it so calmly!"

"Because the vendetta is childish here in America," Luigi said. "It is silly, inefficient. It wastes good blood — as I once wasted blood myself." His eyelids lifted in sardonic amusement.

"The vendetta, then!" Guiseppe ground out. He turned on his heel and slunk out the door.

FOR A WHILE, Luigi stared after him, a look of bravado on his face, but a worm of horror growing in his heart. Perhaps he had gone too far, he thought. But no . . . there were rumors about Guiseppe's family, had rumors even here in the slums, things dark and sinister that were only hinted at. At first, when they both were boys, Luigi had ignored them, for Guiseppe and Bianca were ever his close friends, but the rumors persisted, though he could make neither head nor tail of them. It was as he had always thought — he had grown away from the older things. This was America, in 1954, not dark, haunt-ridden Central Europe. Here the sun shone and at night the streets, brightly lit, kept the terror of the gloomy hours at bay.

It was best, he decided, that he have no contact with them. Besides, he knew where

to seek protection. A word from him and Guiseppe could be silenced. Outside it was getting dark. He felt for the security of the gun in its shoulder holster, went downstairs and out the door.

Down slum streets strewn with garbage, alive with raucous humanity, Luigi passed quietly. In the distance loomed the warehouse he had planned to rob, far down on the waterfront. From rumors he knew the old safe in its main office was easier to open than a tin can — and that it held a juicy \$25,000 in small bills.

The streets became more and more deserted as he neared the waterfront and the warehouse. The street lamps were soon almost drowned in the haze drifting in from off the bay. Quickly circling the building, he made a rapid survey. There was no one behind him. He had almost half-expected Guiseppe to have followed him. But there was no one. Two blocks away, a cop passed around a corner and was lost to view.

Luigi darted into the shadow of an alley. Traversing it quickly, he came to a loading platform with a door leading from it into the warehouse. Often, while casing the job, he had seen the night watchman let himself in by that door. His heart pounding, he tried it. It swung open. Luigi let himself into the dark interior, flattening against the wall. He knew precisely where the office was — down the corridor and fifty feet to the left. Drawing his gun he made his way down the darkened corridor until he came to the bend in the passage. At its end was the office door. Stopping, he listened. There wasn't a sound. Luigi grinned crookedly. He would have no trouble opening the safe. To a man as skilled as he was, only time was important. He would have plenty of time to listen to the fall of the tumblers.

Abruptly, he headed down the bend of the corridor. At that moment the office door opened. Luigi froze, his thoughts exploding.

The watchman!

ONCE, TWICE, Luigi's gun barked. The watchman fell against the door as the thunder of the weapon echoed and re-echoed. Lying on the floor he fumbled in his jacket. Luigi paused, irresolute. Then he whirled as the other fired. An icy, numbing shock smashed down his neck. A sickening flood of warm red blood followed. With terror, Luigi knew his jugular vein had been nicked — not severed, but cut badly enough to allow him to bleed to death quickly. Outside a distant police whistle sounded. Summoning his strength he ran to the loading platform, dodged down an alley and kept running until the warehouse was blocks behind. Then he changed course and ran across town.

It was at the corner of a slum alley that Luigi faltered. He saw the street wobble in

front of him, then rise up like the further end of a see-saw. For one long moment he tried to stay erect. He tottered forward a few yards, then began crumpling. Before he blacked out, he started thinking: *They'll find me. They'll know I was shot. I'll hang, or I'll burn. I'll hang or I'll burn.* Then oblivion came.

The first sound he heard when he woke was a calm, friendly voice:

"Feeling better? You're all right now."

He opened his eyes. He was in a hospital room. The nurse smiled.

"You almost died. Looked like you tore your jugular vein on a nail. Fortunately, someone found you. You were rushed to the hospital. A friend donated blood."

So he wasn't connected with the warehouse shooting. Luigi closed his eyes for a moment in silent thanksgiving: He'd gotten away with it. But who was the friend who had given him his blood?

"Yeah, yeah," he muttered. "It was an accident. You — you say a friend gave me his blood?"

"Yes, he's waiting to see you," the nurse said and went outside.

A moment later, Luigi's eyes widened with shock as Guiseppe and Bianca came into the room. The nurse left, closing the door behind her.

Guiseppe came close to the bed. Both his and Bianca's eyes burned deeply like coals. They stared down at Luigi. Luigi shuddered as Guiseppe laughed. With deep sarcasm Guiseppe began to speak.

"I hope you will not mind. I came as a friend after I had heard about the 'accident' to give you blood."

"As a friend?" Luigi gasped. "But the vendetta . . . ?"

"The vendetta is over," Guiseppe said. "I made sure of that by putting my blood in your veins. Yes, you will marry Bianca, now. You will be one of us. You will have to be one of us, Luigi — or you will starve to death. Only we can protect you."

"One — one of *you*?" Luigi asked, brokenly.

"You have, no doubt, heard of the rumors about my family?" Guiseppe continued. "Yes, you have heard. Well, they are true, Luigi. We are a family of vampires. And now, with my blood in your veins — you are a vampire, too!"

Bianca gently took one of Luigi's hands and began to caress it. He stared up at her, knowing what would be his terrible lot now: the long, endless thirst of the living dead that only fresh warm blood could quench. Then, Luigi began to laugh insanely. What a joke! Yes, he would marry her. He would be tied to her forever, for Bianca would know where warm, fresh blood could be obtained.

The HAUNTED HAND!

ONCE IT WAS TAUGHT
TO MURDER, AND NOW
THAT WAS ALL IT KNEW
HOW TO DO!



FRANK FEY, FAMOUS MYSTERY STORY WRITER, WAS ALWAYS ON THE ALERT FOR POSSIBLE PLOTS, AND HIS SEARCH OFTEN LED TO STRANGE PLACES...

AUCTION! THAT'S FUNNY! MADAM LEE USED TO HAVE A WONDERFUL CURIO SHOP HERE!



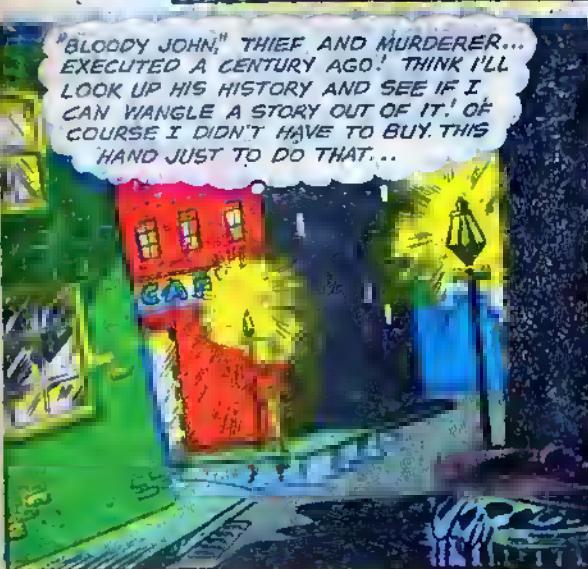
AND NOW THE BIDDING WILL START ON THE EFFECTS OF THE LATE MADAM LEE! PERHAPS SOME OF YOU KNEW THE FAMOUS PROPRIETRESS WHO PRACTICED HER SORCERY RIGHT HERE IN THIS

VERY SHOP...

MADAM LEE DEAD! I DIDN'T KNOW THAT!



FRANK FEY
WELL
REMEMBERED
THE UNUSUAL
COLLECTION
OF CHARMS
AND OCOTIES
THAT ONCE
GRACED THIS
SHOP... INDEED
IT WAS THIS
VERY DAY
THAT BROUGHT
HIM THERE
THAT
EVENING...
FOR INSTANCE,
THERE WAS
THE HAND...



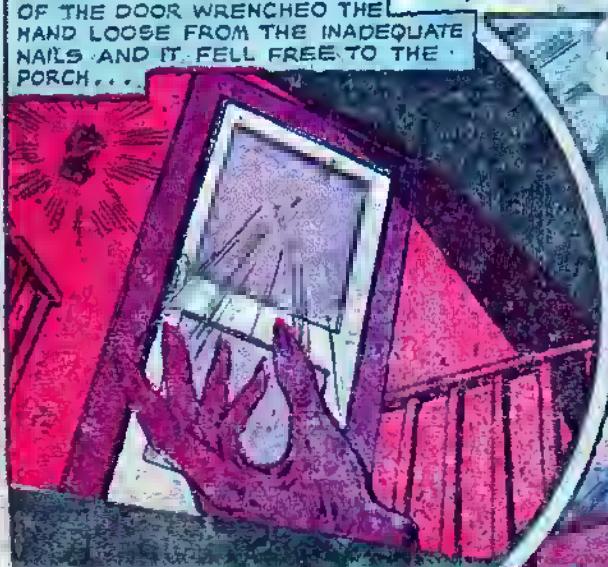
THE UNUSUAL WAS EXPECTED OF FRANK FEY, BUT THE SIGHT OF HIS GORY NEW DOOR-KNOCKER CREATED A HORRIFYING SENSATION AMONG HIS GUESTS THE FOLLOWING NIGHT...



BUT IT'S NOT RIGHT TO MAKE FUN OF A DEAD HAND, NO MATTER HOW OLD IT IS! WHY DON'T YOU GET RID OF IT, DEAR?

I LOVE YOU, JILL, BUT SOMETIMES YOU ACT A BIT SULL! NOW FORGET THE HAND AND LET'S HAVE SOME FUN!

IF FRANK FEY NOTICED THAT THE EVENING WAS STRAINED AND HIS GUESTS UNCOMFORTABLE, HE NEVER BOthered to show it... even when they departed earlier than usual...



THROUGHOUT THE NIGHT, FRANK FEY SLEPT SOUNDLY WITHOUT ANY FEAR. HE THOUGHT OF THE HAND OR ITS UGLY PAST, DREADFUL PRESENT... OR TERRIFYING FUTURE... IT WASN'T UNTIL THE NEXT DAY THAT HE KNEW ANYTHING WAS AMISS...



THE POLICE WERE INVITED INTO FEY'S HOME WHILE HE OFFERED A FLIMSY EXPLANATION OF MISPLACING THE HAND AND A SOLEMN PROMISE TO RELINQUISH IT WHEN IT WAS LOCATED... BUT AFTER THE AUTHORITIES LEFT...

THE CONTENTS OF THEIR POCKETS! THE HAND REMOVED THEM... AND WE DIDN'T EVEN SEE IT!

I'VE GOT TO FIND THAT MONSTROUS THING BEFORE SOMETHING MORE SERIOUS HAPPENS!



ONCE AGAIN WAS THE SEARCH FOR "BLDODY JOHN'S" HAND INTERRUPTED... THIS TIME BY FRANK FEY'S FIANCÉE... RATHER THAN ALARM THE GIRL WITH THE NEWS OF THE HAND, HE TRIED TO AVOID THE SUBJECT...

FRANK, I INSIST ON KNOWING WHERE THE HAND IS!

...DON'T YOU SEE, DARLING, IT'S AN EVIL HAND! IT'S DANGEROUS... AND... AND I HATE IT!

ARE YOU GOING TO BE CHILDISH AGAIN JILL? FORGET THAT HAND!



THE SHRIIL SIGNAL OF THE PHONE CHOSE THAT VERY MOMENT TO SIMMON FRANK FROM THE ROOM...

...ER...YES, OFFICER. I KNOW! HAVE THE STUFF... IT'S SAFE... NO... NO, I HAVEN'T...



SOMETHING DREADFUL IS GOING ON ABOUT THAT HAND, I KNOW... I CAN FEEL IT... DANGER...



NOT DARING TO SPEAK TOO REVEALINGLY TO THE POLICE IN FEAR THAT JILL WOULD HEAR, FRANK CUT THE CONVERSATION SHORT...BUT WHEN HE RETURNED TO THE ROOM...

NO! NO! I REFUSE TO BELIEVE IT! SHE CAN'T BE DEAD... BUT IT'S TRUE! JILL! JILL!

HELP! POLICE! THERE'S BEEN A MURDER! HELP!

IT WAS TOO LATE TO HELP JILL, BUT A DEADLY EARNEST SEARCH BEGAN... FRANK FEY LED THE POLICE FROM ROOM TO ROOM IN A DAZE...

LOOK AT THIS ROOM! THE THING IS WRECKING THE HOUSE!

WE MUST FIND IT... MUST...

NOT A SIGN OF THAT DEVILISH HAND! THIS IS THE QUEEREST CASE I EVER HEARD OF!

I DON'T UNDERSTAND IT... I CAN HARDLY BELIEVE MY EYES!

WHY DID I BRING THAT HAND HOME? WHAT CURSE IS ON ME BECAUSE OF IT... OH, JILL... JILL...

I KNEW IT! I'M NEXT... THEN WHO? THE HAND IS A KILLER!

There was no admitting this killer! Now I, too, was about to become his victim! Escape would be impossible... I would never know where he was going to strike next!

FRANTICALLY
FEY SHOWED
THE NOTE TO
THE SKEPTICAL
POLICE... NOT
ONLY DID
THEY WONDER
ABOUT THE
BIZARRE
CASE, BUT
THEY WERE
BEGINNING
TO DOUBT
FEY'S
SANITY...

SEE FOR YOURSELF!
I MUST HAVE
PROTECTION! IT'LL
KILL ME FOR
CERTAIN!

...STAY
WITH HIM
A FEW
HOURS,
MIKE...

YOU'LL BE ALL RIGHT NOW...
I'M ARMED, BUT BE QUIET
FOR A WHILE,
WILL YOU,
FELLOW?

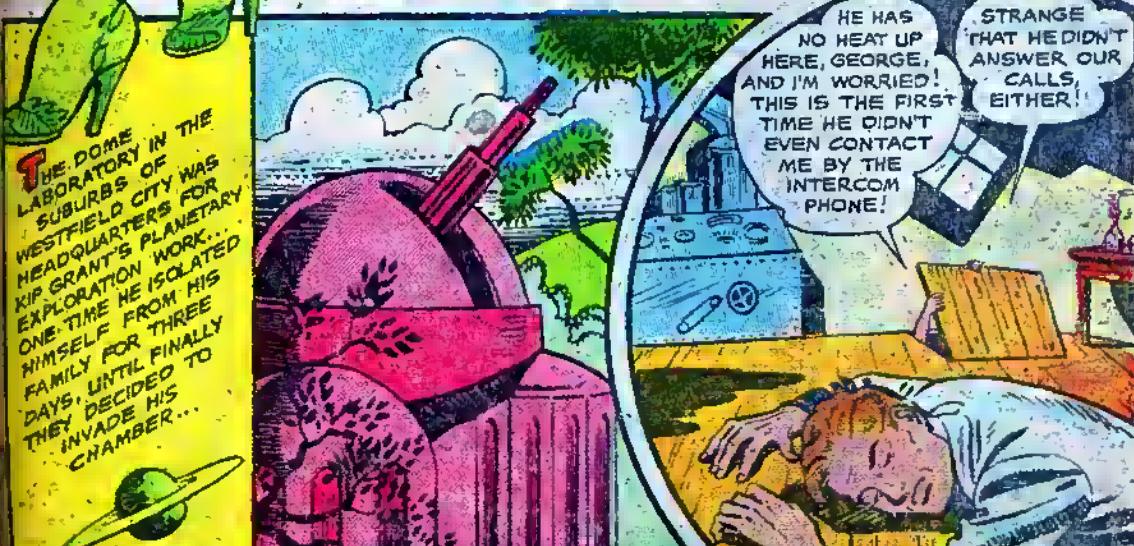
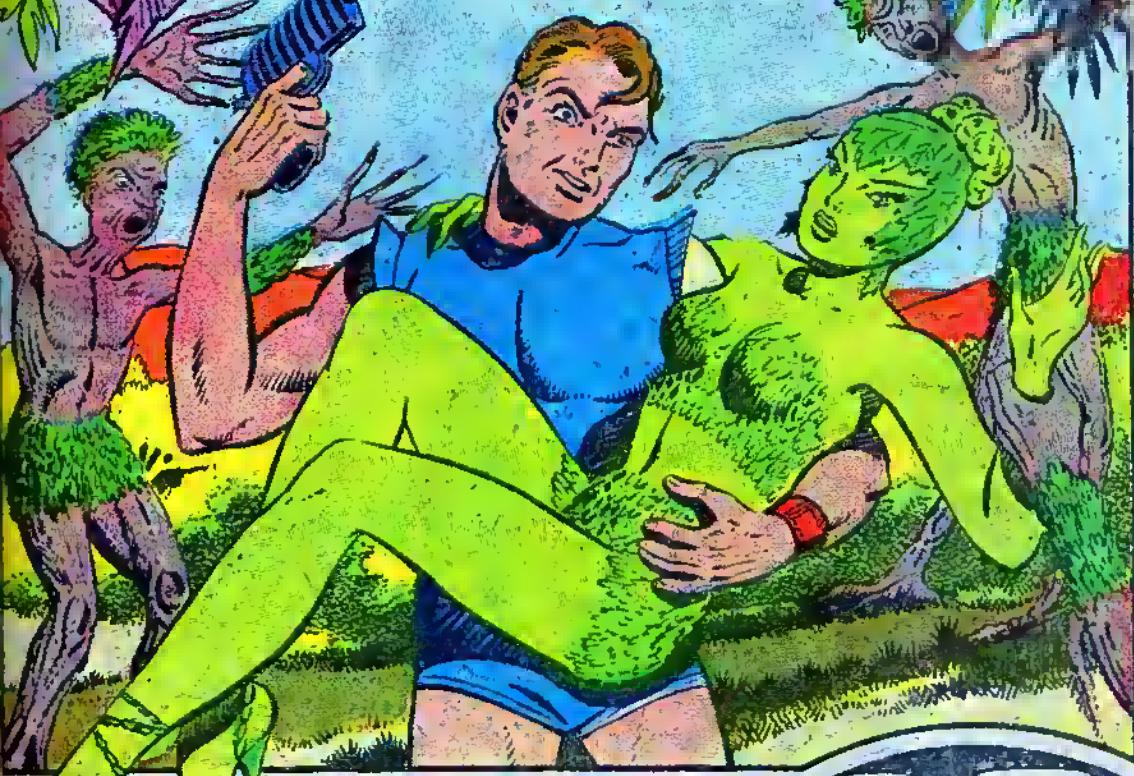


Even with his frantic struggling, there was no ridding the hand held over his face, shutting off breath... Finally Frank Fey's head was smashed against the marble mantle, and without a single cry, he sprawled to the floor inert... lifeless...



PLANET WITHOUT DEATH...

...BUT THERE WAS A SECRET
ON THIS PLANET CALLED
CHOLORS THAT WAS MORE TO
BE FEARED THAN DOOM ITSELF!



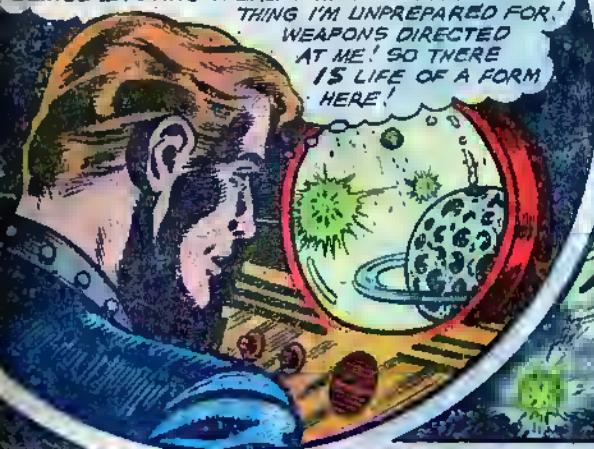
THE DOME
LABORATORY IN THE
WESTFIELD CITY WAS
HEADQUARTERS OF
KIP GRANT'S PLANETARY
EXPLORATION WORK...
ONE-TIME HE ISOLATED
HIMSELF FROM HIS
FAMILY FOR THREE
DAYS, UNTIL FINALLY
THEY DECIDED TO
INVADE HIS
CHAMBER...



NOT EVEN A STUDENT OF SCIENCE IS IMMUNE TO PHYSICAL WEAKNESS... KIP GRANT HAD OVER WORKED IN UNHEATED QUARTERS... HIS WIFE AND BROTHER DISCOVERED HIM GRAVELY ILL... TOO ILL TO HOPE FOR RECOVERY...



THERE SHE IS! THE GREEN PLANET! NOW IF I CAN ONLY HOLD OUT TO REACH THERE! PERHAPS I'VE JUST BEEN KIDDING MYSELF ALL ALONG... I WAS NEVER CERTAIN OF HUMAN BEINGS EXISTING THERE... WHAT'S THIS? SOMETHING I'M UNPREPARED FOR! WEAPONS DIRECTED AT ME! SO THERE IS LIFE OF A FORM HERE!



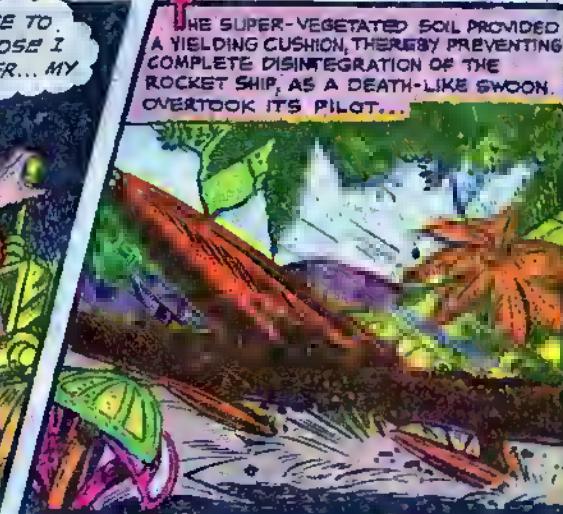
HIS STRENGTH STILL EBING FROM HIM, KIP GRANT FACED A NEW HELPLESSNESS WITH HIS CRAFT BUFFETED ABOUT IN THE UNEXPECTED BARRAGE OF DEADLY MISSILES...

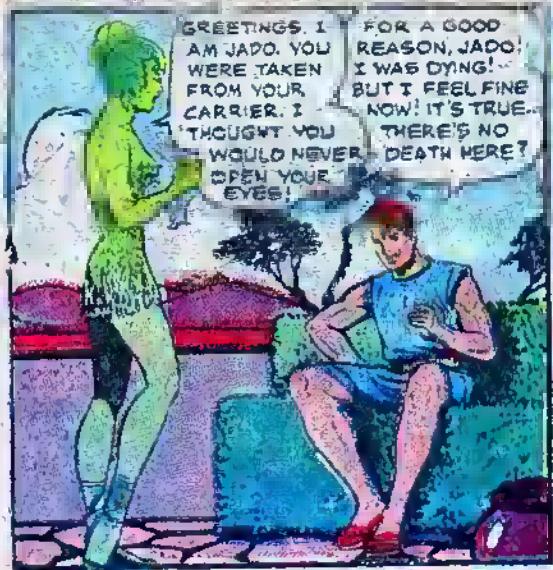


ONE GAMBLE TO MAKE IT, BUT THERE'S NO CHANCE TO NAVIGATE... I'LL HAVE TO CRASH-LAND! I SUPPOSE I HAVEN'T GOT MUCH TO LOSE ONE WAY OR ANOTHER... MY TIME WAS UP BEFORE I TOOK THIS TRIP!



THE SUPER-VEGETATED SOIL PROVIDED A YIELDING CUSHION, THEREBY PREVENTING COMPLETE DISINTEGRATION OF THE ROCKET SHIP, AS A DEATH-LIKE SWOON OVERTOOK ITS PILOT...





WIP GRANT HAD ARRIVED ON CHOLORS PLANET AND WAS SNATCHED FROM THE JAWS OF DEATH ONLY TO FACE A GRIMMER DESTINY. LIFE EVER-LASTING IN THIS SEMI-VEGETABLE FORM WAS A THING OF TERROR!



WHEN THE ROCKET SHIP QUIVERS FROM THE CONCUSSION OF ITS OWN DETONATION AND NOSES UPWARD... SURPRISED BY SUCH A MOVE, THE PEOPLE OF CHOLORS ARE UNPREPARED TO ATTACK THE ESCAPEE...

THEIR HAND-OPERATED RAY GUNS CANNOT HARM US AT THIS DISTANCE, JADO! DON'T LOOK SO WORRIED!

I AM A STUDENT OF EARTH-NAVIGATION-SPACES. IT IS BEST IF I CONTROL THE CARRIER, KIP!

GO TO IT! THIS IS BETTER THAN I EXPECTED! DON'T YOU NEED ANY CHARTS?

WHERE ON THE EARTH-PLANET DO YOU CHOOSE TO LAND?

THERE'S AN AIRSTRIPE DOWN THERE ON MY OWN PROPERTY. I'LL SHOW YOU WHEN WE DESCEND LOWER...

WITH SPLIT-SECOND PRECISION THE GIRL FROM THE PLANET OF NO DEATH BROUGHT THE ROCKET-SHIP DOWN TO EARTH UNDER KIP'S GUIDANCE... HIS HEART LEAPED WITH EXCITEMENT AT THE SIGHT OF HIS OWN HOME!

MARY! MARY, DARLING! IT'S KIP! I'M HOME!

KIP! OH, I MUST BE DREAMING! CAN IT REALLY BE TRUE?

I CAN HARDLY BELIEVE ALL THIS! FOR HER, I'D PROBABLY W-WHO IS SHE, STILL BE ON HER PLANET...CHOLORS!

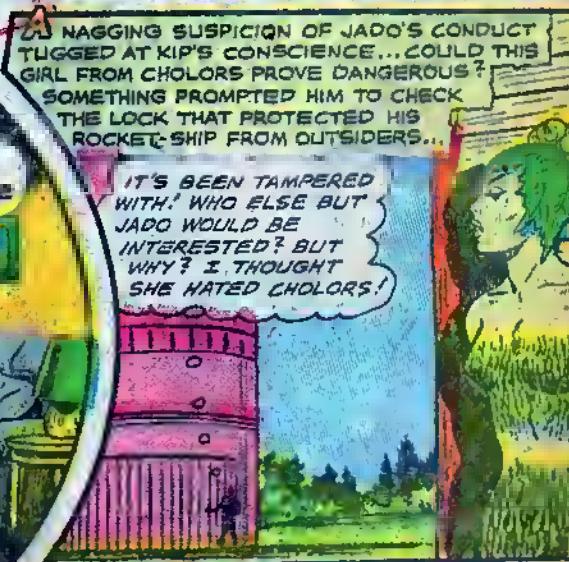
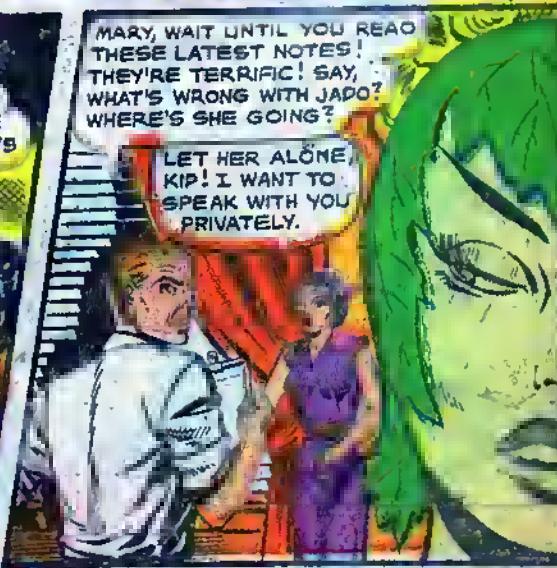
THIS IS JADO. BUT

IT WAS DECIDED A FEW DAYS LATER THAT KIP WOULD RESUME HIS STUDY OF CHOLORS WITH JADO'S ASSISTANCE... HE HAD A DRIVING URGE TO LEARN MORE OF THE PLANET WHERE DEATH TOOK ON SUCH A MYSTERIOUS COUNTER-PART...

DON'T GO, MARY! I'VE BEEN AWAY FROM YOU TOO LONG AS IT IS! I WANT YOU BY MY SIDE...

BUT I'M OF NO HELP TO YOU, KIP!

THE RENEWED ACTIVITY AT KIP'S LABORATORY LEFT LITTLE TIME FOR HIM TO OBSERVE JADU'S FROWNING RESENTMENT TOWARD MARY. JEALOUSY CREATED A STRANGE TENSION BETWEEN THE PLANET GIRL AND HER EARTH-BORN RIVAL...



KIP'S STUDY OF CHOLORS PLANET
WASN'T TO BE ABANDONED BECAUSE
OF JADO'S CONDUCT, AND ONE DAY
HE SAW A MOST UNUSUAL SIGHT...

JADO! LOOK!
I THINK I'VE
CONTACTED
YOUR PEOPLE!
THEY SEEM
TO BE
SENDING A
MESSAGE!

IF I AM NOT
RETURNED, THEY
THREATEN AN EARTH-
BOMBARDMENT. THEY
HAVE WIDE RANGE
WEAPONS THAT
COULD DESTROY
EARTH!

THAT'S WONDERFUL!
IMAGINE GETTING A
MESSAGE FROM ONE
PLANET TO ANOTHER!
IT'S HISTORY MAKING!

JADO LACKED KIP'S EXCITEMENT
AS SHE OBSERVED THE PLANET'S
ACTIVITY AND TRANSLATED IT INTO
SIMPLE LANGUAGE... IT WAS A
THREAT OF WAR!

DO YOU KNOW WHAT
WAR MEANS, JADO? YOU
MUST DO SOMETHING
TO STOP THEM!

PLEASE, MARY,
LEAVE HER ALONE!
I WANT TO THINK
THIS THING OUT
FIRST...

MY PEOPLE
ARE GOOD...
THEY...OH...

GREAT SCOTT! LOOK
AT HER! I NEVER
DREAMED THIS WOULD
HAPPEN! SHE'S STRICKEN
WITH CHOLORSIS! IT WILL
DRAIN ALL LIFE
PROPERTIES
FROM HER!



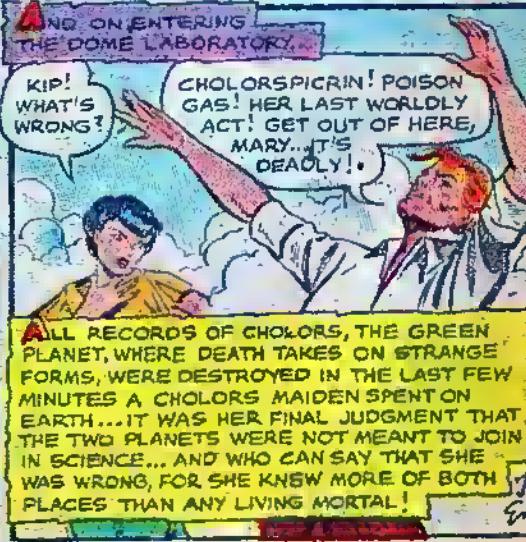
CHOLORSIS, WHICH BLEACHES VEGETABLE MATTER BEFORE IT RAPIDLY KILLS IT, HAD SEIZED THE PLANET GIRL AND SHE PACED UNEASIERABLE EARTH-DEATH.

WHY HAVEN'T I PAID CLOSER ATTENTION TO HER? SHE MUST HAVE BEEN FADING DAILY... AND I NEVER NOTICED!

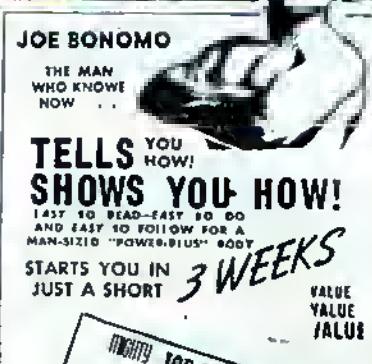
YOU MUST DO SOMETHING, KIP!

SHE'S BEEN LONELY AND UNHAPPY HERE. SHE MUST BE RETURNED TO HER OWN PLANET!

YOU'RE RIGHT! COME WITH ME, MARY AND WE'LL PREPARE THE ROCKET SHIP, THEN GET HER INTO IT AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE!



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